The Committee on the Rights of the Child holds a Pre-Sessional Working Group meeting


The National Coalition of NGO's on the Rights of the Child in Mongolia delegation included Ms. N. Bolormaa, President of the Coalition, Ms. S. Narantuya, Coordinator of the Coalition, Ms. Enkhjargal of the National Center Against Violence, and Ms. Batkhishig, project Officer of Save the Children Mongolia. The National Coalition was founded in 1999 by 23 NGO's and today it has some 66 NGO's as its members. Also UNICEF Mongolia was invited to Pre-Sessional Working Group Meeting and it was represented by Mr. Richard Prado, country representative.

The meeting was opened by Mr. Jacob Egbert Doek, Chairperson, Committee on the Rights of the Child and present were the following Committee members: Ms Yanghee Lee and Mr. L. Citarella, both Rapporteurs for Mongolia for the session; Mr. H. Kotrane, Ms. M. Khattab, Ms. I.I.A.A. Az-Sheddi, Mr. L.F. Krappmann, Mr. N. Liwski, Mrs. A.N. Ouedraogo, Mrs. N. Vuckovic Sahovic and Mr. L. Smith.

The invitees from Mongolia provided the Committee and its members with additional information on specific aspects of the implementation of the Convention in the country.

Mongolians Help the Tsunami Victims

On 26 December 2004, an earthquake measuring 9.0 on the Richter scale that occurred off the coast of Indonesia, triggered a series of massive tsunamis that slammed into the coastlines of some countries in South and South East Asia and Africa, killing more than 200,000.

In the wake of the disaster, on 3 January UNICEF Mongolia with the support of TV9 – a private Mongolian TV company and Ms. T. Ariunaa, pop singer and UNICEF National Ambassador, made an appeal to extend helping hand to meet the urgent needs of millions affected by this tragedy.

The people of Mongolia responded to the appeal and started coming into the UNICEF Mongolia office to make their contributions in cash and in kind to help the tsunami victims and to overcome the aftermath of the natural disaster.

ARIGU – a private media and communication agency developed, free-of-charge, a 20-second video appeal calling on the public to contribute to the relief effort, which were aired pro bono for more than a month by TV9 including three other private television companies - TV5, Channel 25 and Pupils of "Orchlon" school - one of many schools that contributed for the relief effort

A Region Where Every Child Counts

Delegates representing 26 East Asian and Pacific countries, including Mongolia, pledged to do much more to close the growing gaps in society that threaten many of the region’s 600 million children with malnutrition, ill-health, exclusion from education, neglect and exploitation. They attended the 7th East Asia and Pacific Ministerial Consultation on Children which was held in Siem Reap, Cambodia from 23-25 March.

Mongolia was represented by Mr. Ch. Ulaan, Deputy Prime Minister, who headed the country delegation. The Mongolian delegation included...
Letter from the Representative

Dear Partners for Children,

The beginning of the year witnessed an unprecedented natural tragedy that struck many of the countries in our region. The natural disaster that struck in South and South East Asia on 26 December 2004 killed more than 200,000, affecting an estimated 1.5 million children. Mongolia, a country far away from the region and unaffected by the disaster, also rose up, together with the rest of the world, to extend its helping hand through UNICEF to the millions of affected children.

We would like to sincerely thank all public and private organizations, individuals who have contributed to the relief aid. Special mention should be made of school children who gave their lunch and pocket money to help their contemporaries in the disaster areas in the belief that the suffering of our neighbor is my suffering too.

We are also proud that Mongolia has successfully introduced Hib-(penta) vaccine into the National immunization programme. Children usually received three shots to get these antigens, now they will get only one shot to get all 5 antigens at once.

A very important event for UNICEF Mongolia this would be the Mid Term Review of the Government of Mongolia – UNICEF Country Programme of Cooperation (2002-2006), which will be held in late April. The objective of the Mid-Term Review is to take stock of the accomplishments and challenges in the implementation of the country programme in its mid-term and also to outline adjustments in the remaining period of the country programme. We hope that this exercise will provide an opportunity to make the necessary changes and amendments to the Country Programme strategy.

The Spring session of the Mongolian Parliament will open shortly and it is our strong hope and we believe that the Mongolian State and Government, which are committed to promoting the development and protection of children will put on its agenda the following policy documents for consideration and approval. They include the Law on the Protection of Children and other international laws and conventions on juveniles.

With warm regards,

Richard P. Prado
Representative

(Contd. from pg 1. Tsunami relief effort)

Ulaanbaatar Broadcasting Service TV as well as the Mongolian National TV.

Ms. T. Ariunaa, pop singer and UNICEF National Ambassador gives donation for tsunami victims

And four of the six major dailies of Mongolia – Unen (Truth), Ardyn Erkh (People’s Right), Udrin Sonin (Daily News), and Zuuny Medee (Century News) put up UNICEF appeal for donation to the Tsunami victims, also on a pro-bono-basis.

As of 31 March 2005, UNICEF Mongolia had received 52.193.487 tugrugs or the equivalent of 43.171 US dollars in donations and contributions from over 100 individuals, including many school children, as well as another 100 private business companies, public organizations and religious institutions. Even today, as the Newsletter goes to the press, contributions continue to come. What is most important is not only in the amount of funds raised but the sentiment and the sincerity of the contributions made.

UNICEF once again gives full assurance that all this donation will directly help the Tsunami victims as each of UNICEF’s Country Offices have their own annual budget to cover their overhead costs, and so these donations will go solely to the relief effort.

Taking this opportunity, UNICEF Mongolia extends its sincere thanks to the Mongolian people for their kindness and generosity in helping UNICEF help alleviate the suffering and rebuild the shattered life of the victims of Tsunami.

(Contd. from pg 1. CRC Preessional Working group meeting)

Mongolia signed the Convention on the Rights of the Child on 26 January 1990 and has ratified its two Optional Protocols, one on the involvement of children in armed conflict and the other on the sale of children child prostitution and child pornography. The first State Party Report was examined by the Committee in 1996 while the Mongolian Government submitted the Second and Third State Party report on the implementation of the Convention in May 2003. This report covers the period from 1995 to 2000. At the Pre-sessional Working Group meeting, the National Coalition of NGO’s and the UNICEF Representative provided additional information on the implementation of the Convention and the situation of the rights of the child in Mongolia covering the period from 2002 to 2004.

It was announced at the meeting that the Plenary Session of the Committee on Mongolia will be held on 26 May 2005 in Geneva, Switzerland, which will hopefully be attended by high level delegation of the Government of Mongolia.

Introducing Hib (penta)vaccine in immunization in Mongolia

A launching ceremony for introducing Hib-(penta) vaccine into the National immunization programme was organized by the Ministry of Health on 3 January 2005 at Sukhbaatar district Health complex. Since 2002 the Ministry of Health made efforts, supported by UNICEF, WHO and other members of ICC in EPI, to apply to GAVI funds to introduce Hib (Haemophilus influenza type B) vaccine in Mongolia.

The vaccine, which was successfully tested in Gambia and introduced in many countries, proved to be very efficient in reducing acute pneumonia – one of killer diseases among young children.

Mongolia is introducing penta-vaccine, which is combination of 5 antigens: Hib with Hepatitis and DTP component.

Children usually receive three shots to get these antigens, now they will get only one shot to get all 5 antigens at once. Penta-vaccine will be introduced in Mongolia with financial support of GAVI in a staged manner from 2005-2008.

A Region Where Every Child Counts

In 2001 the United Nations General Assembly asked UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan to prepare a comprehensive global study on violence against children. The Study is led by the Independent Expert, Paulo Pinheiro, and supported by the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, UNICEF and WHO. It will be completed in 2006.

The purpose of the study is to provide an in-depth picture of the prevalence, nature and causes of violence against children. It will put forward recommendations for consideration by Member States, the UN system and civil society for appropriate action, including effective remedies and preventive and rehabilitative measures at the national and international levels.

A UNICEF youth poll in 2001 found that 60 per cent of children in Europe and Central Asia say they face violent or aggressive behaviour at home from parents and caregivers. Drug and alcohol abuse are among the most common and serious family problems contributing to violence against children in the home. Estimates from industrialized countries suggest that between 40 per cent and 70 per cent of men who use physical violence against their partners also use violence against their children, and that about half of the women who are physically abused also abuse their children.

The study, which is being finalized in Mongolia, is guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child which emphasizes children’s rights to physical and personal integrity, and outlines States parties obligations to protect them from “all forms of physical or mental violence”, including sexual and other forms of exploitation, abduction, armed conflict, and inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. It also obliges the State to ensure preventive measures and ensure that all child victims of violence receive the support and assistance they require.

In Mongolia, the National Agency for Children served as the main coordinating agency for completing the study questionnaire. The government, civil society and children themselves were involved in answering the questionnaire for the study. Discussions and meetings, addressing violence against children, were conducted through national TV, FM radios and websites.

Approved by the Government, the final draft of answers for the questionnaire is sent to the independent consultant working on the finalization of the study. National level activities on child violence issues are planned within the Child Protection project of UNICEF Mongolia in 2005. Consultations to discuss the study findings and to identify follow up actions will be held at the regional level. You can visit www.huuhed.mn website to get more information on violence against children.

UN Study on violence against children

Forty children and young people from 19 of the region’s countries, Mongolia including, demanded a larger role in all decisions affecting their welfare.

They called for expanding educational opportunities for young people, the strengthening HIV/AIDS prevention programmes, increased child involvement in the decision making process both within the family and at school, and steps to address the negative impact of cultural change and the media, and increasing employment opportunities for young people.

The only high level gathering of this type dedicated exclusively to children, the Ministerial Consultations were initiated after the World Summit for Children in 1990 and have been held every two years since 1991. Over the last decade, the Consultations have provided an important forum to discuss progress to achieving global commitments to the achievement of child rights. They have served as an important way to exchange ideas, strengthen regional cooperation for children and their outcomes have fed into the development of country specific National Plans of Actions for children.

In unanimously adopting the Siem Reap-Angkor Declaration in 2003, the region’s countries pledged to: “…find ways to guarantee free or affordable services to all members of society. We recognize that the survival, growth and development of our children is a national public good that will guarantee the future success of our societies, and that, a such, it is worthy of a significant investment of public funds and resources”.

UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy and UNICEF Regional Director Anupama Rao Singh with children “We look forward to working with all partners to make sure the commitments outlined in the Siem Reap-Angkor Declaration are translated into urgent action for the children of this region, especially the millions of children who in one way or another are deprived of their right to grow up healthy, to get an education or who remain at risk of exploitation or trafficking,” said Anupama Rao Singh, Regional Director of UNICEF’s East Asia and Pacific Office.

That all the region’s countries were united by their common commitment to children’s rights and their understanding that sustained respect for the rights and their understanding that sustained respect for the children of this region, especially the millions of children who in one way or another are deprived of their right to grow up healthy, to get an education or who remain at risk of exploitation or trafficking,“ said Anupama Rao Singh, Regional Director of UNICEF’s East Asia and Pacific Office. that all the region’s countries were united by their common commitment to children’s rights and their understanding that sustained respect for the children of this region, especially the millions of children who in one way or another are deprived of their right to grow up healthy, to get an education or who remain at risk of exploitation or trafficking. Recognizing that the survival, growth and development of our children is a national public good that will guarantee the future success of our societies, and that, such, it is worthy of a significant investment of public funds and resources.”

The declaration also reiterated the countries’ commitment to the Bali Consensus, which was agreed upon in 2003 at the conclusion of the 6th Ministerial Consultation in Bali, Indonesia. The Bali Consensus urged greater action by the region’s governments to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS, combat child trafficking and the related sexual exploitation of children, and to better address maternal and neonatal mortality and child malnutrition.

An alliance of non-government organizations urged the region’s countries to address the issue of violence against children, noting that it pervades “every aspect which is endemic the lives of children. They called for greater participation of the region’s governments in the on-going UN Study on Violence against Children and urged them to commit themselves to carry out the recommendations that come out of the study. The Ministerial Consultation was preceded by a three-day Regional Children and Young People’s Forum, which was also held in Siem Reap from 20-23 March.

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**News in Brief**

**Access to Water and Sanitation Services in Mongolia Report**

The launch of "Access to Water and Sanitation Services in Mongolia" Report was held at the Government Palace on 22 March - the World Water Day. The study was commissioned by UNDP in collaboration with WHO, UNICEF and Mongolian Government in order to promote understanding of various issues, underlying access to water and sanitation services by poor people in Mongolia.

The study findings show that the basic human right of using 20-40 liters of water daily, entitlement to safe drinking water and basic sanitation is not met in Mongolia as internationally recommended. There is a severe inequity in consumption of water among ger dwellers (4-9 liters per day) and apartment dwellers (240-450 liters per day). Gender and child labor issues accompany poor access to water and sanitation provisions: water is collected by children in 36.4% of the surveyed households and 53.4% of women and 49.3% of girls collect water by hand.

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**Ulaanbaatar city Authorities**

**Take an Interest in CBSS**

The Ulaanbaatar City Council – the local assembly takes a keen interest in Convergent Basic Social Services (CBSS) programme which is being supported by UNICEF and implemented in two districts of the city.

On 9 March, Ms. N. Bolormaa, Chairperson of the Presidium of the Khural of People’s Representatives of the City Council of Ulaanbaatar visited khoroos 9 and 10 in Bayangol district to see the progress, impact of CBSS and its FES component, empowerment strategy (FES).

Ms. Bolormaa speaking to Council Presidium Members underlined that with the presentation on CBSS and its FES component, foundations have been laid for cooperation with UNICEF and that the Council Presidium will seriously consider ways and means to introduce and replicate the strategy in other districts of Ulaanbaatar- a fast growing city in terms of population. At present, CBSS is being implemented, apart from Ulaanbaatar, in 10 soums of five aimags.

**New Staff**

Ms. Bayardulam Baasanjav joined UNICEF Mongolia in February 2005 as a special assistant for UNICEF- UNESCO joint project for school rehabilitation and maternal mortality rate. The documenters and teachers in dzud affected aimags in Mongolia. Prior to this assignment, she worked as an engineer for “Con Consulting” construction consulting company. She likes to spend her free time with her family and play sport games with her friends.